

It is my understanding that Sinclair Broadcasting, like other broadcasting companies, uses the airwaves -- a publicly owned resource -- free of charge, and has made a commitment to serve the public interest in exchange for this use of the public's airwaves. A decision to force their stations to pre-empt their regular programming in order to show a clearly partisan, one-sided "documentary" only a few days before a close presidential election cannot possibly serve the public interest. Their decision, I assume, is made out of interest in their own bottom line, as they perceive that if Bush wins the election, their company (and others like it) will be able to consolidate more and more stations, leading to more profit for their executives. Does the FCC not have a responsibility to ensure that the public airwaves are in fact used in the public's interest, as opposed to that of media executives? Please give serious consideration to the process you use in renewing licenses for companies such as Sinclair, who are so flagrantly abusing our public resources. If the law does not prevent companies like Sinclair from providing so much "free media" to the Bush campaign (or any campaign -- unless the same is provided to all campaigns, which would be ideal!), all the more reason that media ownership regulations should be tightened and strengthened, so that no single company's unethical actions can have undue influence in our democracy. This, above and beyond the deepening need for diverse, quality LOCAL journalism in our communities, a need that is increasingly unmet as long as media companies are allowed to expand ever larger. FCC, I believe it is not too strong to say that the integrity of our democracy is largely in your hands!